

Infantry Squad Tactics

Some of the lessons learned during MOUT in the battle for Fallujah.

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Historically speaking, military operations on urbanized terrain (MOUT) have created casualty figures that are extraordinary compared to similar operations conducted in different types of environments. The casualties in MOUT present a significant challenge to small unit leaders. Casualties in Fallujah hit Marine infantry squads and fire teams extremely hard because, generally speaking, the squads were already under table of organization standards. Some squads in 3d Battalion, 5th Marines (3/5) commenced the assault on the Jolan with only six Marines. It is the small unit leaders' duty to accomplish the mission with the fewest casu-

alties possible. In order for small unit leaders to complete the above task they need tactics and techniques that will prevent casualties.

Section 1 of the Scout/Sniper Platoon has attacked and cleared buildings with all of the line companies in 3/5. The authors have observed nearly all of the squads in the battalion and have "rolled in the stack" with many of them. This is an experience that few in the battalion have. Knowing this, we believe it is our duty to consolidate our observations, produce a comprehensive evaluation of squad tactics and techniques, and pass it onto the squad leaders. Our intent is to give the squad leaders options in combat. It is by no means a "bible," but it is a guideline. One squad or another has proved all of the tactics and techniques in combat. Section 1 does not take any credit for the information contained in this article. The information was learned through the blood of the infantry squads of 3/5. The entire evaluation has one underlying theme—*accomplish the mission with the least number of casualties possible.*

Terrain and Enemy

Terrain. The city of Fallujah, Iraq is unlike any city for which Marines have trained. The layout of the city is random. Zones distinguishing between residential, business, and industrial are nonexistent. An infantry squad would be clearing a house initially, then have to clear a slaughterhouse or furniture wood shop in the adjacent buildings. The streets are narrow and lined by walls. The walls channel the squad and do not allow for standard immediate action drills when contact is made. This was not an issue because the majority of contact was made in the houses, not in the streets.

The houses are densely packed in blocks. Adjacent houses are either connected or within a few feet of each other. This configuration enabled the insurgents to escape the view of Marine overwatch positions. The houses also are all made of brick with a thick covering of mortar. In almost every house a fragmentation grenade can be used without fragments coming through the walls. Each room can be fraged individually.

Generally, all houses have an enclosed courtyard. Upon entry into the courtyard, there is an outhouse large enough for one man. Rooftops and a large first story win-



Marines with 1/3/5 provided security outside a house in Fallujah, 10 December 2004. (Photo by LCpl Miguel A. Carrasco, Jr.)

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dow overlook the courtyard. Most houses have windows that are barred and covered with blinds or cardboard restricting visibility into the house. The exterior doors of the houses are both metal and wood. The wood doors usually have a metal gate over top forming two barriers to breach. Exterior doors have two to three locking points. Some doors are even barricaded from the inside to prevent entry. Two to three entry points, opening into rooms such as the kitchen and sitting rooms, are found either in the front, sides, or rear. The differences between the interior and exterior doors are their strength and durability. Interior doors only have one locking point, and most of them can be kicked in. All doors inside and outside of the house were usually locked.

The layout of all of the houses is generally the same. Initial entry by the front door leads to a small room with two interior doors. The two doors are the entrances to two adjacent, open sitting rooms. The size of the rooms is directly proportionate to the size of the house. At the end of the sitting rooms are interior doors that open up into a central hallway. The central hallway is where all of the first floor rooms lead, and it contains the ladder well to the second deck. The second deck will contain more rooms and an exit to the middle rooftop. The middle rooftop will have an exterior ladder well leading up to the highest rooftop.

Enemy. The two types of insurgents that the squads engaged will be labeled the guerrillas and the martyrs for this evaluation. Guerrillas are classified by the following principles:

- The guerrillas' purpose is to kill many Marines quickly and then evade. They *do not* want to die. Dying is an acceptable risk to the guerrillas, but their intention is to live and fight another day.
- The tactics used are classic guerrilla warfare. The guerrillas will engage Marines only on terrain of their choosing, when they have tactical advantage. After contact is made the guerrillas will disengage and evade.
- Their evasion route normally is out of sight of Marine overwatch positions.

The martyrs are classified by the following principles:

- The martyrs' purpose is to kill as many Marines as possible before they are killed themselves. Time does not have any significance. The martyrs want to die by the hands of Marines.
- Their tactics directly reflect their purpose. The martyrs will make fortified fighting positions in houses and



Marines of 3d Platoon, L/3/5 rehearse urban combat tactics at Camp Baharia, November 2004. (Photo by Sgt Luis R. Agostini.)

wait. Marines will come, the martyrs will fight, and they will die in place.

Both the guerrillas and martyrs employ small arms, grenades, and rocket propelled grenades. The martyrs have used heavy machineguns and antiair machineguns, unfortunately, with good effects. The battle positions and tactics that both employ are somewhat similar. The major differences between the two are the egress route and the fortifications. Guerrillas have an evasion plan and normally do not have fortified fighting positions.

Marines were engaged from mouseholes within the house, guerrillas shooting down from the rooftops when moving into the courtyard, guerrillas and martyrs shooting and throwing grenades down the ladder wells, in second deck rooms that are fortified or blacked out, and upon breaching of interior doors. Martyrs have also emplaced machinegun positions in rooms facing down the long axis of hallways.

The egress routes the guerrillas use are preplanned and well rehearsed. They move in groups and withdraw perpendicular to the Marines' forward line of troops (FLOT). Their movement is through windows of houses, down back alleys, and from roof to roof (only when obscured from Marine overwatch positions). The routes minimize exposure in the streets. Martyrs do not cross streets that run perpendicular to the FLOT, only parallel. This tactic is used because Marine snipers during 2/1's attack last April devastated the insurgents when attempting to cross those streets. If contact is made with guerrillas, and the block is not isolated on all four sides, then their chance of escape increases exponentially. Isolation of the block is absolutely necessary in order to prevent any "squirters."



Marines with I/3/5 move from house to house in Fallujah, 9 November 2004. (Photo by Sgt Luis R. Agostini.)

Overall, the enemy has adapted their tactics and techniques in order to maximize their strongpoints and hit Marines when they are the most vulnerable. They have learned from 2/1's attack last April. This is common sense, but it must be said in order that Marines realize that the enemy they are fighting is somewhat intelligent. In MOUT it only takes a miniscule amount of intelligence in order to create massive numbers of casualties.

Squad Tactics

Squad movement. During house-to-house, detailed clearing attacks, squads must minimize exposure in the streets. The streets, especially in Fallujah, can become a deathtrap if a squad is engaged. The squad should run from house to house in a stack with all elements (security, assault, and support) in their appropriate positions. In the street, the stack should be slightly staggered like a tight tactical column. The Marines should have some dispersion, and the pace of the running should not be so fast that the Marines are uncontrolled and not maintaining all-around security. As soon as the point man/one man reaches the courtyard breach the stack should close the gaps of dispersion and swiftly move to accomplish their tasks.

All danger areas while on the move must be covered. Security must be three-dimensional and all-around. Each Marine in the stack looks to the Marines to his front, assesses danger areas that are not covered, and then cov-

ers one of them. If every Marine does this, then all danger areas will be covered.

Top-down versus bottom-up assaults. An infantry squad can assault structures using two different methods. Traditionally, the top-down assault is taught as being the most ideal method for clearing a structure. Realistically, this may not be the best option for the infantry squad. Below are the advantages and disadvantages of both top-down and bottom-up assault methods.

Top-down advantages are:

- Surprising the enemy by moving from the top down may throw the enemy off balance. The enemy's defenses may not be prepared for a top-down assault, and the squad could overwhelm the enemy rapidly.
- The squad has more momentum when moving down the ladder wells.
- If the squad knows that the enemy is inside, the roof can be breached in order that grenades and explosives can be dropped in.
- The enemy's egress routes are greatly reduced because the squad can isolate the house by holding security on the back alleys and the front of the house from the roof.

Top-down disadvantages are:

- Once the squad makes entry and contact is made, pulling out of the structure is extremely difficult. This limits the options for the squad leader on how to engage the enemy. The structure must be flooded with Marines,

and Marines have to go over the top of casualties in order to kill the enemy. Momentum must not be lost. Marines have been left behind in houses because the momentum was lost.

- If the squad decides to break contact, they are moving opposite their momentum and more casualties will result.
- Marine squads may not have enough Marines to effectively flood the structure.
- If casualties are taken they are nearly impossible to pull up the ladder well with all of their gear and a limp body. This is another reason why the structure must be flooded.
- The casualties will not receive immediate first aid because the entire squad must be committed to neutralization of the threat. The swiftness of medical attention may mean the difference between life and death.

Bottom-up advantages are:

- The squad leader has many options when contact is made. The structure does not have to be flooded.
- Momentum can be maintained in assaulting or breaking contact, and the squad leader can switch rapidly from one to the other.
- The structure can be cleared with fewer Marines because the clearing is more controlled and smooth, whereas a top-down assault is always in high gear.
- Casualties can be pulled out faster and easier simply because gravity is working for the squad.

Bottom-up disadvantages are:

- The squad is moving into the enemy's defenses. It is easy for the enemy to hold the second deck and ladder well.
- The squad is slow moving up the ladder well making it harder to maintain momentum.
- The enemy has the ability to escape by using its pre-planned routes.

Overall, there should not be a standard assault method. Rather, the squad leader should understand the advantages and disadvantages of each method, assess each structure quickly, make a decision on which method to employ, and then take actions that maximize its advantages while minimizing its disadvantages.

Gaining footholds. Footholds are extremely important. By establishing footholds the squad establishes strong-points during the assault that can be used for consolidation, coordination, base of fire positions, rally points, and casualty collection points. The squad must move from one foothold to another, never stopping until each foothold is attained.

The succession of footholds that the squad establishes will be different when assaulting from either the top down or the bottom up. The following footholds should be seized in this order when assaulting from the top down:

- All rooftops.
- The inside top deck.



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- Each individual lower level to the bottom deck.
- The courtyard.

The footholds seized when assaulting from the bottom up are in the reverse order. They are:

- The front courtyard.
- The first two seating rooms.
- The central hallway.
- Each successive upper deck with its respective rooftop.
- Uppermost rooftop.

At each individual foothold the squad can consolidate and coordinate further clearing of the structure. If contact is made, the footholds can be used to establish a base of fire in order to assault or break contact. When breaking contact, footholds are used as rally points in order for the squad and fire team leaders to get accountability of all of their Marines. The squad will bound back through each foothold. A foothold can also be used as a casualty collection point.

Structure clearing. During the assault on a structure there are three different tactics that the squad can use for entry into the structure. The three types of entry are dynamic, stealth, and subdued. The dynamic entry is vio-

When breaking contact, footholds are used as rally points in order for the squad and fire team leaders to get accountability of all of their Marines.

lently aggressive from start to finish. The commands are verbal and yelled. The squads lead by fire, placing one or two rounds in every door that is closed or window that is blacked out. Fragmentation grenades, stun grenades, and flash bangs are used. At night, surefire flashlights are employed in order to clear. The movement of the squad is swift and overwhelming for the enemy inside.

The stealth entry is exactly the opposite of the dynamic entry. The squad breaches quietly, moves slowly, speaks only in whispers, and listens for any movement within the house. There is extreme emphasis placed on initiative-based tactics (IBT). During night clearing, night vision goggles and AN/PEQ-2s are used instead of surefire flashlights. The stealth entry confuses the enemy on exactly where the squad is in clearing the house and allows the squad to maintain the element of surprise.

Subdued entry is a combination of the two previous types. The squad moves quietly until they encounter a room. Upon entry into the room, Marines are violently aggressive. After the room is cleared, the Marines switch back to the stealth method of entry. This type of entry allows the squad leader to control the rate of clearing while maintaining some element of surprise.

It is important to note that squad leaders must vary the type of entry. The squad must constantly mask its movement through every form of deception that may confuse the enemy inside the building or room. It is up to the entire squad to use its imagination and vary entry tactics

and techniques as much as possible. The objective is to keep the enemy off balance and not allow him to get into the squad's rhythm.

Breaching. There were three types of breaching used in Fallujah—mechanical, ballistic, and explosive. Mechanical breaching of the exterior walls of the courtyard or gate was mostly done by assault amphibious vehicles (AAVs), tanks, D-9 bulldozers, or HMMWVs. Sledgehammers and hooligans were used to breach both the metal and wooden doors of the house, but this was not—and is not—the preferred method for breaching. Sledgehammers and hooligans are slow, and they require the breacher to stand in front of the door being breached. Standing in front of the door allows the enemy to engage the breacher through the door.

Ballistic breaching was used mostly on exposed padlocks. Both M16A4s and shotguns were used. The M16A4s were employed because there was not enough shotgun ammunition for the number of locks that had to be breached. They were fairly effective on first round breaching of padlocks if the round was placed near the center. The M203 was also used. Squads would breach doors of houses that were 50 to 100 meters in front of their positions with the M203. It worked extremely well on the exterior metal doors.

The last type of breaching employed was explosive. A multitude of charges were used in order to breach walls, gates, exterior doors, and interior doors. Some of these will be discussed later in this evaluation.

An important principle that was learned in breaching is that the Marine making entry is *never* the breacher. The breacher should always fall in the back of the stack and never go in first. Marines have died because they followed their own breach.

In traditional MOUT training, making nonstandard entry points, such as walls and windows, is taught. Unfortunately, Marines were responsible for clearing 50 to 60 structures a day. There simply was not enough time or explosives to breach the walls or barred windows. Almost all of the entry points were existing doors.

Speed is the most significant factor in all types of breaching. If one method of breaching is not working, then the breacher must quickly transition to a different type. Standing in front of a door and beating it with a sledgehammer for 10 minutes is unacceptable. The breacher must be able to employ the different methods. The squad leader must ensure that the breacher has the necessary equipment and explosives for each type. Every time the squad is stalled because of a breach, it is placed in a vulnerable position. Breaching swiftly and effectively is necessary in order for the squad to maintain momentum.

Movement of the squad within the structure. Within the structure, the squad should move from one foothold to another. The initial foothold is established by the security element. The security element rolls onto the rooftop or courtyard and clears every room on the outside. The assault element proceeds directly to an entry point to prepare for the breach. The support element falls in trace and makes the breach.

After the breach is made the assault element makes entry and clears the entire top deck. If bottom-up assault is used then the squad clears the first two sitting rooms simultaneously by splitting the stack. The support element will assist the assault element by peeling off to clear rooms or breach any doors. Security will be left at the rooftop or courtyard foothold in order to isolate the structure and secure the squad's egress route. Only two Marines can maintain security. The rest of the security element will fall in the stack. After the initial foothold in the structure is gained, the stack will consolidate and then advance and clear to the next foothold. The succession will continue until the entire structure is cleared.

At all times the squad will move by using IBT and adhere to its principles, which will be addressed later. No Marine should make an uncovered move. The squad should move at a pace that is swift but controlled, exercising "tactical patience."

Actions upon enemy contact. The squad leader's options for actions upon enemy contact vary according to where the squad is in its clearing, and whether any casualties have been taken. In any contact, the squad and squad leader have two priorities—eliminate the immediate threat and pull out any casualties. Unfortunately, more often than not, the two priorities are connected.

If contact is made in the courtyard or rooftop, the squad should break contact, isolate the house or block, and call in supporting arms (tanks, AAVs, etc.). There is no reason to place Marines in the building until it is thoroughly prepped. If contact is made in the house, then the squad leader must quickly evaluate the situation and decide the best course of action. Generally, the squad leader has the following three options:

- Break contact. Breaking contact is more of an option during the bottom-up assault because of the difficulties in changing the momentum during the top-down assault. If casualties are taken, or the enemy resistance is strong, then this may be the best action for the squad leader to take. Upon breaking contact the squad will bound from one foothold to another. At each foothold, accountability of all Marines should occur, ensuring that no Marine is left behind. When leaving the house, the squad can place a satchel charge or another explosive device in order to bring down the house or burn the enemy out.



Marines with 1/3/5 enter the streets of Fallujah through a hole they created, 9 November 2004. (Photo by Sgt Luis R. Agostini.)

- Flood the house. Squad leaders may choose to flood the house with Marines if a casualty is taken during the top-down assault or if the enemy threat is not significant. Casualties cannot be dragged up the stairs quickly; therefore, Marines must neutralize or suppress the threat in order to extract the casualties.

- Hold the last foothold and clear by fire. Footholds are strongpoints from which the squad can fight. At the foothold, Marines can return fire, throw grenades, and use explosive devices to neutralize the enemy. After the enemy has been damaged, the squad can move in and clear the house. If the rooftop is the foothold the squad is holding, then the roof could be breached by a directional charge. Grenades or incendiary devices can be thrown into the structure flushing out the enemy.

Casualties must never be left behind! The squad leader must ensure that every Marine moves with a buddy. Each buddy is responsible for pulling the other out of the fight if he goes down. The squad leader and fire team leaders must have accountability for all of their Marines at all times. There is no excuse for Marines being left behind in a building while the squad pulls out.

Organization of the Squad

Some squad leaders in the battalion split their squads in two and assigned different sectors to the two different parts. They did this to move faster through the houses because they were tasked with clearing lanes that may have contained 50 or 60 houses. Although this tactic worked, and the squads moved faster through their assigned sectors, it is not the best employment of their squads. The following reasons are given on why splitting the squad is not advisable:

- If the squad contains 12 Marines and is split in half, that leaves 2 teams of 6 Marines. Clearing a structure with six Marines, even if the house is small, is extremely risky. If a buddy team of two Marines got hit and went down there would not be enough Marines to provide covering fire while pulling the casualties out. Critical seconds would be wasted waiting for the other team of the squad to come in the house and support the extraction of the casualties. The chances of wounded Marines being left behind would be increased exponentially.

The number of Marines contained within each element will vary according to the squad's number of Marines, the skills and abilities that each individual Marine possesses, and the weapons systems that each Marine employs. . . .

- If contact is made by both teams simultaneously, then the squad could be cut down in a piecemeal fashion within a matter of seconds before other squads could even move to reinforce.

When the squad leader organizes his squad he must always think about enemy contact. Squads must not be split in order to increase the speed of clearing. Commanders should not put stress on the squad leaders to clear at a speed that would force the squad leaders to make that decision. Tactical patience must be exercised at every level.

The squad should be organized by using the traditional three elements of assault, support, and security. The number of Marines contained within each element will vary according to the squad's number of Marines, the skills and abilities that each individual Marine possesses, and the weapons systems that each Marine employs (M249 squad automatic weapon (SAW), M203, and advanced combat optical gunsight scoped M16A4s).

The assault element must contain no SAWs if that is possible. A SAW gunner must never clear rooms. The assault element should contain the most Marines because every room must be cleared with two Marines. The support element will supplement the assault by falling in the stack and peeling off to clear rooms.

The support section should include any engineers or assaultmen attached to the squad. A SAW gunner should be included in this section in order to provide massive firepower in the house if contact is made. The corpsman is also located in the support section because he can use his shotgun to breach as well as provide quick medical attention to casualties. The support section will fall in the stack behind the assault element to assist in any way.

Security should contain the other remaining SAWs in the squad. The security element is responsible for clearing and securing the courtyard or rooftop foothold prior to the assault element moving to the entry point. When assault and support make entry into the structure, two Marines are left behind to isolate the house (rooftop) and secure the squad's entry point. The rest of the Marines will fall in the stack behind the support section.

The security Marines will hold security on all danger areas (mostly the stairs) when the assault and support sections are clearing each foothold.

Squad leaders must appoint each fire team leader as an element leader. There are no longer fire teams, only assault, support, and security sections. Each element leader will maintain accountability for his section. It is easier for the squad to maintain this organization until the attack is completed, and then the traditional four-Marine fire team can be reinstated. The squad leader

should emphasize unity of command and succession of command should the squad leader become a casualty.

Squad Communications

Intersquad communications between the Marines in the stack is both verbal and visual. Simple, clear, and universal language should be used. In other words, use words and phrases that are standardized so every Marine understands the other—words and phrases such as “hold right, clear left” and “frag out.”

The point man/one man should describe to the stack what he is seeing. He verbally paints the picture for the stack behind. Marines in the stack should be listening not talking. Talking should be kept to a minimum.

After Clearing/Continuing Actions

After the structure has been cleared, the squad must immediately conduct a detailed search of the house for weapons. The search must be quick, but thorough, leaving nothing untouched. Weapons were found in every conceivable place—underneath couches in the cushions, in between piled up blankets, etc.

Another continuing action is to render the interior and exterior doors unable to close. This action helps if the structure needs to be cleared again later. Marines will use their creativity to think of ingenious ways to accomplish this task.

Mission or Time Has Priority

In detailed clearing attacks, time should never be the priority. Marines should never be rushed because they can become sloppy and are forced to create shortcuts in order to accomplish the mission under the time constraints. This statement does not mean that the squads shouldn't be pushed. It means that a realistic timeline for the attack should be made—a timeline that takes into account the overwhelming task of clearing multiple blocks of houses that may contain platoon-sized elements of insurgents.

Individual Techniques and Tactics

Training. Training is continuous, whether in a combat

zone or not. The responsibility of the squad leader is to ensure that his squad is combat ready. The individual Marines in his squad must be continuously trained. Marines will rapidly lose proficiency in skills if they do not continually practice.

Training does not have to be physical; it can be verbal. The most effective training in a combat environment is for the squad leader to sit down with his squad and talk. The squad should run through combat scenarios and have individual Marines tell the squad what their jobs are and how they will accomplish them. Communications, through universal language, can be practiced simply by always using it, even when walking to chow.

All Marines must exercise initiative during combat. Squad leaders must design training techniques in order to stress initiative. Marines must be able to look around, assess what their squads or partners are doing, feed off it, and act in order to support them. IBT is paramount.

Constructive criticism should be encouraged. Every Marine debriefs each other, telling good and bad observations. The squad leader should also be critiqued by his Marines. The criticism is not meant to undermine the squad leader's authority. It is to allow the squad leader to instruct the Marines on why he chose to run the squad the way he did. Young Marines will gain knowledge about squad tactics that they may never have figured out if the squad leader did not tell them. It will prepare them for leadership billets. It will also give them confidence in their squad leader because they will trust him and his knowledge.

Techniques. Techniques that individual Marines need to be taught and practice are the following:

- Pie off all danger areas. Before entry into a room, as many danger areas as possible should be pied off leaving only one or two corners that need to be cleared. Don't blindly rush into a room, especially if the door is open.
- Use the buddy system. Two Marines always peel off the stack, never one.
- Pick up uncovered danger areas, including when opening doors to furniture large enough to fit a man inside.
- Clear obstacles, such as furniture.
- Prep rooms with grenades.
- If the room is too small for two Marines, or not enough Marines are clearing the house to hold security on all of the danger areas, the number two man turns around and covers the rear of the Marine clearing the room.
- Move stealthily through a structure even with broken glass on the ground.
- Make a stealth entry with night vision goggles and AN/PEQ-2s.
- Make breaching charges and place them on the locking points of different types of doors.

These are just some of the techniques that need to be practiced and passed on to younger Marines.

Tactics. IBT should be taught. There are four rules of IBT. They are:

- Cover all immediate danger areas.
- Eliminate all threats.
- Protect your buddy.
- There are no mistakes. Every Marine feeds off each other and picks up the slack for the other. Go with it.

Every Marine needs to understand and memorize the rules governing IBT. These rules should not only apply to MOUT but to all small unit infantry engagements. Rule number four must be particularly emphasized to the squad. There are no mistakes when clearing a structure in combat, only actions that result in situations—situations that Marines must adapt to, improvise, and overcome in a matter of seconds.

Supporting Arms

Throughout contemporary American military history there has never been an opponent that could not be overwhelmed by American supporting arms. The Marine Corps historically has been an innovator with their employment. The Marine Corps created the concept of close air support (CAS) in Haiti during the Banana Wars, helicopter envelopment in Korea, and the combined arms team portrayed in the modern Marine air-ground

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task force. Fallujah has been another proving ground for American supporting arms. The insurgents were completely overwhelmed by the massive indirect fires and CAS on the first 2 days of the battle.

At the squad level, the results of these fires were felt through the type of enemy they encountered. The enemy dug deep into the houses. The infantrymen of 3/5 have learned the advantages and disadvantages, through practical experience, of fixed-wing CAS, rotary-wing CAS, tanks, combined antiarmor teams (CAATs), AAVs, artillery, bulldozers, and 81mm and 60mm mortars.

Fixed-wing CAS is an enormous weapon that has great effects on the ground. The major problem with it is the amount of time it takes to get bombs on target. It took entirely too long for bombs to be dropped when Marines were in contact. Additionally, the minimum safe distance of the ordnance was too great in order for even the street block to be isolated, and that shortfall allowed the enemy to escape countless times. Fixed-wing CAS should be used for deep targets. It should not be used when Marines have isolated a structure and trapped the enemy inside. A tank or CAAT section can be more effective because Marines do not have to be withdrawn from the cordon.

In contrast to fixed-wing CAS, rotary-wing CAS was extremely timely, but the effects on target were not extraordinary. The Hellfire missiles used did not bring down entire structures, but they did do some damage.

By far, the best two supporting arms used were tanks and CAATs. Tanks and CAATs were the infantryman's best friends. The battle would have been incredibly bloodier if it had not been for tanks and CAATs. The tanks were able to provide a 120mm direct fire weapon at the location of any contact within a matter of minutes. The thermal sites were able to pinpoint the exact position of snipers and then effectively neutralize them within seconds. CAAT sections used their M2 .50 caliber machine-guns and Mk19 grenade launchers to breach as well as destroy buildings from which fire was received. In addition, CAAT Marines helped by clearing buildings that lined the street in their lanes. The infantry should never attack in MOUT without tanks or CAATs.

Mortars and artillery proved effective by forcing the enemy to stay in the houses and fight the Marines in the street.

Demolitions

The majority of explosives used during the fight for Fallujah will not be mentioned here. The few that will be explained have the common theme of being obscure and may be forgotten if they are not written down. Each explosive device was developed in response to the enemy's tactics and has been proven to work.

The following is a list of explosives, a description, and their uses:

- "Eight ball." A one-eighth stick of Composition 4 (C4) explosives used for breaching both interior and exterior doors—effective and doesn't use a lot of C4.

- "House guest" (named by 2d Squad, 1st Platoon, Company I, 3/5 (I/3/5). Propane tanks placed in the central hallway with C4 used to ignite them. Creates a fuel air explosive. Used for bringing down a house when contact is made inside. Propane tanks must be full.

- A 60mm or 81mm white phosphorous mortar round, wrapped three times with detonation cord, and a one-quarter or one-half stick of C4. Used when contact is made in a house, and the enemy must be burned out.

- Molotov cocktails. One part liquid laundry detergent and two parts gas. Used when contact is made in a house, and the enemy must be burned out.

All Marines should be familiar with explosives and proper placement of the charge for breaching. Any Marine should be able to cut a time fuse, crimp a blasting cap, and put the blasting cap in C4.

Randomness of Tactics and Techniques

The infantry squad must have a toolbox of tactics and techniques. The squad should not fall into a pattern where they become predictable. Being predictable allows the enemy to prepare and modify his tactics in order to exploit the squad's weaknesses. The squad must be trained well enough to flow through or combine each tactic and technique fairly easily. Marines must use their imaginations to think of ways to vary their actions. The enemy must be kept off balance by constantly changing squad tactics at random. For instance, vary the method of entry into the structure, lead by fire then don't, assault top down then bottom up, don't use the same entry point every time, throw a fragmentation grenade on the middle roof then assault bottom up. Avoid patterning by all means.

Combat Mindset

Preparing Marines for battle is a difficult task for the squad leader. A squad leader must be the rock on which his Marines will lean. He must drill into his Marines that no Marine will be left behind. Marine combat infantrymen understand the meaning of "Semper Fidelis." No Marine is left behind.

Marines have to prepare mentally for casualties and be able to rebound quickly in order to kill the enemy swiftly. Quickly killing the enemy will reduce casualties. The old saying, "anything that can go wrong, will," is always in effect in combat.

Every time a squad makes entry they should expect to make contact. Surprise, speed, and maximum violence win small unit bat-



A Marine from I/3/5 kicks in a door in Fallujah, 10 November 2004. (Photo by Sgt Luis R. Agostini.)



Marines with I/3/5 patrol through Fallujah, 9 November 2004. (Photo by Sgt Luis R. Agostini.)

ties. Marines and leaders need to make quick decisions on the move—and under fire—while always remembering unity of command.

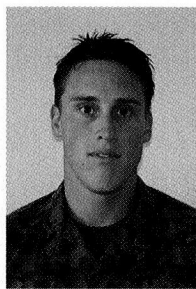
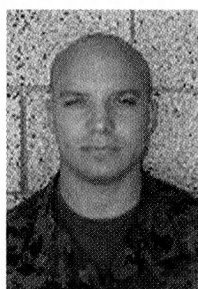
In combat, Marine leaders are required to stand up and take charge. Unfortunately, sometimes there are too many chiefs and not enough Indians. The “chief syndrome” will

create mass confusion on the battlefield. Being a good combat leader sometimes means stepping back and allowing the Marines to do their jobs. Platoon commanders must allow squad leaders to lead their squads, squad leaders must allow element leaders to lead their elements, and element leaders must allow their Marines to take initiative.

Conclusion

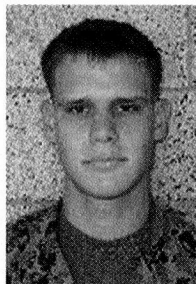
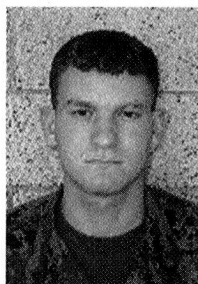
This evaluation is nothing more than a guideline for infantry Marines. Squad leaders should take this evaluation, study it, critique it, give it to their squads, have them study it, critique it, and then sit down together to discuss it. The tactics and techniques contained in the evaluation were gained at an enormous price.

Marines were killed on the field of battle developing these tactics. It is the duty of every Marine infantryman to ensure that these lessons do not die with time. This evaluation is only one step in passing on the knowledge.



>Sgt Catagnus is currently a Section Leader, Scout/Sniper Platoon, 3/5. He has proposed and is currently preparing a 3-day professional warfighter course for fire team leaders and above within 3/5. He is working on the last 15 credits needed for a bachelor's degree from Penn State University.

>>Sgt Edison is on terminal leave in northern California. He plans to attend college this fall. He is also thinking about becoming a Marine officer.



>>>LCpl Keeling is serving as an Assistant Section Leader, Scout/Sniper Platoon, 3/5. He is currently working on improvements to demolitions used during the battle for Fallujah. He will deploy with the battalion when it returns to Iraq.

>>>>LCpl Moon graduated from Scout/Sniper School and has become an MOS-qualified scout/sniper. He is LCpl Keeling's Section Leader. LCpl Moon is responsible for teaching and training all new-joins to the Scout/Sniper Platoon.